

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-02 USIA-15

PRS-01 SP-02 DIWY-01 TRSE-00 /062 W

-----130306Z 043665 /62

R 120535Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7660

INFO USMISSION OECD PARIS

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB

UNCLAS TOKYO 6930

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE REPORTS UNEMPLOYMENT IN MARCH  
HIGHEST SINCE 1959

REF: TOKYO 3490

1. ACCORDING TO REPORT RELEASED MARCH 10 BY PRIME MINISTER'S  
OFFICE AND PLAYED PROMINENTLY BY ALL MEDIA, NUMBER OF  
UNEMPLOYED IN JAPAN AT END OF MARCH 1977 (NOT SEASONALLY  
ADJUSTED) STOOD AT 1,270,000, HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE 1959.  
REPORT SAID AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR JAPAN FISCAL  
YEAR 1976 (ENDING IN MARCH 1977) WAS 2.0 PERCENT AND THAT  
UNEMPLOYMENT IN MARCH, USUALLY HIGHEST MONTH, WAS 2.4  
PERCENT (N.S.A.). AVERAGE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED IN  
JFY-76 WAS 1,060,000, APPROXIMATELY 20,000 MORE THAN IN  
JFY-75.

2. WHILE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED GREW, REPORT SAID NUMBER  
OF THOSE WITH JOBS ALSO INCREASED: TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN  
JFY-76 AVERAGED 52,820,000, A MODEST 0.8 PERCENT  
INCREASE FROM 52,400,000 AVERAGE FOR JFY-75. OF  
420,000 INCREASE IN NUMBER EMPLOYED, 170,000 WERE  
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MALES AND 250,000 FEMALES; INCREASE IN NUMBER OF WOMEN  
EMPLOYED IN JFY-75 REPRESENTS SHARP IMPROVEMENT FROM  
10,000-PERSON INCREASE IN FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN JFY-75.

3. AMONG THOSE HARDEST HIT BY UNEMPLOYMENT DURING  
JFY-76 WERE MALES OVER 55. AT APPROXIMATELY 200,000,  
NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED OLDER MALES LAST YEAR WAS

NEARLY DOUBLE FIGURE RECORDED IN JFY-73, JUST PRIOR TO RECESSION. AS DESCRIBED IN REFTTEL, GOJ IS NOW IN PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT SECURITY FUND AIMED MAINLY AT ALLEVIATING UNEMPLOYMENT IN THIS AGE GROUP THROUGH GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED RETRAINING SCHEMES.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PRESS COVERAGE AND REPORT ITSELF DID NOT PROVIDE SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA, STAFF AT PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TOLD EMBASSY MARCH FIGURE FOR SEASONALLY ADJUSTED NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED WORKERS WAS 1.03 MILLION, AN INCREASE FROM PRIOR MONTH, BUT STILL 7.2 PERCENT LESS THAN SEASONALLY ADJUSTED PEAK UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS OF 1.11 MILLION RECORDED IN JUNE AND JULY LAST YEAR. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN MARCH '77 WAS .19 PERCENT (N.S.A. FIGURE WAS 2.4 034:3,5), BELOW 2 PERCENT "WARNING ZONE" BUT STILL PAINFULLY HIGH BY JAPANESE POSTWAR STANDARDS. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED OR NOT, FIGURES SHOW THAT JAPAN STILL HAS LONG WAY GO GO BEFORE RECESSION-CAUSED UNEMPLOYMENT IS REDUCED TO TOLERABLE LEVELS.  
SHOESMITH

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009